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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [IR](#) [AJ](#)
SUBJECT: TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS BETWEEN IRAN AND NAKHCHIVAN
EASED

REF: 06 BAKU 1471

Classified By: DCM Jason P. Hyland for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (U) On March 12, Baku newspapers reported that visa requirements between the Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhchivan and Iran had been eased. According to these reports, residents of Nakhchivan will now be allowed to travel to the Iranian border regions - any area within 45 kilometers of the border - visa free up to twelve times per year. For Nakhchivan residents seeking to travel to Iran more frequently or beyond the 45 kilometer border zone, a three-month, multiple-entry Iranian visa will be required. This visa will be available to Nakhchivan residents, free of charge, at the Iranian Consulate General in Nakhchivan or Embassy in Baku. These same restrictions will reportedly apply to Iranian citizens visiting Nakhchivan. Previously, residents of Nakhchivan with an Iranian-issued special travel document were allowed visa free travel to Iran up to four times per year (reftel).

12. (C) Confirming these reports, the head of the Azerbaijani border service, General Farhad Tagizadeh, told Embassy EXBS Advisor that these same privileges would not be extended to Azerbaijanis wishing to enter Iran from border crossings on the "mainland" Republic of Azerbaijan-Iran border. Citing the Armenian blockade and its economic impact on Nakhchivan, General Tagizadeh said that the special waiver for Nakhchivan had been granted due to "the need for local economic trade and development."
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